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The Japanese Immigrants in California Agriculture

MASAKAZU IWATA

The noteworthy contributions made by the Japanese immigrants to California's agricultural development before World War II are undeniable. Indeed, a study of their history reveals that the realization of the agricultural potentialities of the State has been due in no small measure to their endeavors. The Japanese, as in the case of most European immigrants to this country, were induced to leave their homeland because of unfavorable economic conditions. Arriving in ever increasing numbers after the turn of the twentieth century, the *Issei*¹ settled in the Pacific Coast states where most of them worked as ordinary laborers in various industries. Spurred on by the desire for wealth which would enable them to return to and retire in Japan, the Japanese worked diligently under the most trying circumstances. Their vaulting ambitions soon enabled them to make successfully the transition from laborers to tenant farmers. As farm operators, the *Issei* continued a life of struggle not only against the elements but also against adverse social, economic, and political pressures. But despite such discriminatory legislation as the anti-alien land laws, the Japanese, many of whom sought protection in organization, made notable advances in agriculture. Hence by 1941, they, along with the *Nisei* who in the meantime had joined their parents in farming, were producing between thirty and thirty-five per cent by value of all commercial truck crops grown in California as well as occupying a dominant position in the distribution system of fruits and vegetables, both wholesale and retail. Many of the immigrant farmers were also engaged in the production of fruits and nuts and in the raising of flowers and poultry. Although the significance of the *Issei* in agriculture was virtually terminated as a result of the Second World War,² it would be remiss if history should fail to recognize the vital part they have played in the growth of California agriculture.

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In general, the history of Japanese immigration to the United States varies very little from that of other new immigrant groups who came to this country. The Japanese, like the Europeans, were motivated by a desire to better their economic situation. They were likewise compelled to engage in the more menial tasks in their initial efforts to earn a livelihood, and in time were to arouse hostility among groups within the economy. Finally, as in the case of other immigrants, the Japanese were to gain for themselves a foothold in limited fields of endeavor, predominantly agriculture.³

Japanese immigration to the United States prior to the turn of the twentieth century was insignificant. Before 1900 arrivals from Japan comprised less than one per cent of the total annual volume of immigration to this country.⁴ The earliest Japanese entrants were shipwrecked seamen, the most famous of them being apprentice sailor Hikoza Hamada who in the 1850's was adopted and educated by the collector of customs in San

¹ *Issei* literally means "first generation." The children of the first generation Japanese in the United States are called *Nisei*, or "second generation." The bulk of the Japanese American students in high schools and colleges today are *Sansei*, or third generation Japanese.

² At the beginning of World War II the average age of the *Issei* was already in the sixties. Consequently, after the evacuation interlude, only a small minority among them had the necessary energy, inclination, and capital to re-establish themselves in farming. The *Issei* are a fast disappearing generation. For statistics regarding their average age, see United States Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Population: 1950*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 3, Chapter 13, Nonwhite Population by Race (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), p. 86.

³ See United States Congress, *National Defense Migration*, Fourth Interim Report of the Select Committee Investigating National Defense Migration (House Report No. 2124), 77th Congress, 2nd Session, May, 1942 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 59. Hereafter cited as U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*.

⁴ In 1899 the immigrant aliens admitted from Japan numbered 3,395 out of a total of 311,715 immigrant aliens who entered the United States. See United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Immigration, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration: 1928-1929* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1929), p. 194.

Francisco.⁵ In 1870 only fifty-five Japanese lived in the United States, but by 1890 two thousand more had reached the country.⁶ An increasing number of Japanese aliens were admitted after 1900; during this one year alone more than 12,000 new arrivals were counted. The peak was reached in 1907 when more than 30,000 migrants reached the "land of promise." Thereafter the annual influx steadily declined as the result of the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 which curtailed the migration of Japanese nationals to the United States and Hawaii. By the eve of World War I, however, the migration figures had once more begun an upward trend with 10,168 Japanese admitted in 1918, a reflection of America's willingness to receive aliens to compensate for the dearth of laborers in the national emergency. Finally, after the passage of the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924 the flow of immigrants became a mere trickle. In 1928, for example, only 522 Japanese were admitted to the United States.⁷

Figures indicate that among the Japanese entering the various Pacific Coast ports a large percentage of them drifted to and eventually settled in California. Hence the proportion of all Japanese in continental United States settled in California increased from 42 per cent in 1900 to 57 per cent in 1910 and 65 per cent in 1920. The Chinese in contrast were in the beginning exclusively in California and later dispersed to other parts of the United States.⁸ Obviously the Japanese were drawn to California by its climate and increasing agricultural and business opportunities.

The Japanese were motivated to come to America primarily by economic factors. To many of them emigration was a means by which they could escape the hardships of life in an impoverished homeland where, especially after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, living conditions progressively worsened. Japan's population density had increased from 1,335 per square *ri*⁹ in 1872 to 1,885 in 1903 which meant that with each successive year a country with limited resources and land area had to satisfy the needs of more and more people.¹⁰ Intense competition among the working classes forced millions of them to live under great economic pressure. The

workers, together with the farmers upon whom fell a disproportionate share of the tax load, eagerly came to the United States, hoping to make a quick fortune while at the same time avoiding military conscription. A smaller group of immigrants came specifically to attend American schools.¹¹ Once in America the immigrants themselves adver-

⁵ Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1932), pp. 19-21.

It is said that members of the Japanese race came to California as early as 1610. Three years later a group of Japanese Catholics on its way to Rome landed here. See Tomatsu Murayama, "Tokyo Topics: First Japanese Landed in California Near Mendocino," *Pacific Citizen*, December 17, 1954, Sec. B, p. 9; James Murdoch, *A History of Japan* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1925), II, p. 595 ff.

A San Francisco newspaper gives an account of "a party of refined Japanese gentlemen, one of whom had been the Governor of Jedo [sic]," who in 1868 were compelled to flee Japan and come to the United States because of their liberal ideas. These Japanese, who spoke English and French, leased a farm in Alameda County and hired a few intelligent white men to instruct them in farm methods. Their venture subsequently produced handsome profits. Editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 17, 1869.

⁶ United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the U.S.: 1930. Population*, Vol. II, General Report (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 32.

⁷ United States Department of Labor, *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration: 1928-1929*, pp. 194-196.

⁸ Varden Fuller, *The Supply of Agricultural Labor as a Factor in the Evolution of Farm Organization in California*, United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Violation of Free Speech and Rights of Labor*, Hearings before Subcommittee, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, on S. Res. 266, January 13, 1940, Pt. 54, Agricultural Labor in California (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 19828.

In 1900 out of the total of 24,326 Japanese residents in the country over 10,000 of them lived in California while by 1940 these figures had risen to 126, 947 and 93,717, respectively.

The following is a breakdown of figures of the California Japanese population into native and foreign born elements covering the period 1900-1940:

Year	Foreign Born	Native Born	Total
1900	10,008	143	10,151
1910	38,184	3,172	41,356
1920	51,138	20,814	71,952
1930	48,477	48,979	97,456
1940	33,569	60,148	93,717

See United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Vol. II, p. 32; United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population*, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Pt. 1, U. S. Summary (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 21, 518.

⁹ A square *ri* equals 5.9552 square miles.

¹⁰ Yosaburo Yoshida, "Sources and Causes of Japanese Emigration," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. XXXIV (September, 1909), p. 158.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160.

tised the benefits of life in the new land and thereby induced other Japanese to venture across the Pacific. Like their European counterparts, the Japanese in America delineated in their letters to friends and relatives an often exaggerated picture of American opulence and opportunities. Such correspondence, as well as magazine and newspaper articles dealing with success stories among the Japanese residing in the United States, encouraged migration as did emigration societies which advertised for emigrants through newspapers and traveling solicitors.¹²

The early Japanese immigrants were mostly unmarried males, the majority of whom were under thirty-five years of age,¹³ who began their careers in this country as common laborers. Most of them worked as railroad, cannery, and logging camp laborers while a smaller number were employed in the mining, meat-packing, and salt industries. Their willingness to accept even lower wages than laborers of other races enabled the Japanese to secure employment readily.¹⁴ In a number of instances they were used as strike breakers in the mines of Colorado and Utah.¹⁵ The Japanese, in contrast to the Chinese, were unable to enter manufacturing establishments in the cities, such as the cigar, shoe, and clothing factories, partly as a result of the earlier agitation against the Chinese who were employed in these industries and because there was an adequate supply of European immigrant labor for these jobs.¹⁶

Unable to enter the ranks of the more desirable occupations and unwilling to remain as laborers in non-agricultural employment, the Japanese even prior to 1910 showed a strong inclination to leave their original work for employment in agriculture. This movement into farm work was motivated by a desire for higher earnings in an occupation that had always been looked upon with respect in Japan and for which the Japanese were better fitted through experience.¹⁷ In California the *Issei* were first employed as farm laborers in the Vaca Valley as early as 1887 while in 1891 thirty of them were working in the vineyards of Fresno. Others in the early nineties sought employment in the New-castle fruit district, the hop-growing area of

the Pajaro Valley as well as in the lower Sacramento and San Joaquin river country and in the Marysville and Suisun Districts. Even before the close of the century the Japanese had secured a foothold in the beet fields of the State. It was only after 1900 that they found employment in the southern California citrus fruit industry. Many were recent employees of the railroad which had discharged them in favor of the Mexicans.¹⁸ By 1909 approximately 30,000 Japanese laborers were engaged in the various phases of California agriculture, especially in those aspects requiring hand-work.¹⁹

The predominance of Japanese immigrant labor in California agriculture by 1910 was due to several factors. During the nineties when there was a general abundance of agricultural laborers²⁰ the newly arrived Japanese resorted to wage-cutting to gain a foot-

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164. See also Yamato Ichihashi, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88; United States Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), I, p. 662. Hereafter cited as U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*.

¹³ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 8.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58. For a comparison of the pay received by the Japanese and other races in the railroad, lumber, fishing, mining industries, see *ibid.*, pp. 37-41, 47, 48-49, 53, 56.

¹⁵ U. S. Immigration Commission *Reports*, I, p. 664.

¹⁶ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 33.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 59. In the Japanese social structure under Tokugawa feudalism (1600-1867) the farmer ranked above the merchant and below the warrior class.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁹ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, I, p. 667; U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 64. The majority of the Japanese farm laborers in California were originally seasonal workers, but by 1910 a considerable number of them had settled in the various farm communities where they worked for both white and Japanese farmers.

Berry producers employed Japanese almost exclusively; more than half of the workers in sugar beets, nursery products, and grapes were Japanese. They were not used extensively on hay and grain farms and in the hops. In the southern citrus area, Japanese constituted one-half to three-fourths of all the seasonally employed. The year 1909 was the highest point in Japanese employment. Subsequently they tended to transfer from white-operated farms to the rapidly expanding Japanese-operated farms. Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 19831, 19833.

²⁰ Although Chinese exclusion had cut off the source of Chinese labor by the nineties, the stagnation in non-agricultural industries beginning in 1889 and extending throughout the 1890's caused the release of a large number of white workers who drifted into farm work. Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 19830.

hold in the various farming districts.²¹ After 1902 a labor vacuum drew heavily on the large number of incoming migrants from Japan.²² Other characteristics of Japanese labor favored their employment in the intensive type of agriculture of the State. The localities in which intensive farming was carried on usually specialized extensively in one or only a few crops, a situation which required large forces of laborers for short seasons only. The Japanese, present in large numbers after 1900, had few family ties and property and were therefore less reluctant than the white men to engage in seasonal agricultural work which required migrating from one district to another.²³ The organization of *Issei* laborers in gangs under Japanese bosses, which was as much a boon to the laborer as it was to the employer, served also to secure the position of the Japanese as farm workers.²⁴ The Japanese labor agents located in various farming communities conducted boarding houses and stores where their men lived on a cooperative plan. The bosses not only obtained work for their gangs and carried on all the necessary wage negotiations with the employers but collected the wages for men and paid them their individual earnings. Under these conditions the employers could keep their bookkeeping at a minimum, having to pay only the labor agent the contracted sum, and be assured of a supply of reliable labor. Hence California ranchers made little effort to secure white laborers for whose services the employers had to negotiate individually, whose wages had to be paid to each personally, and whose reliability was doubtful because only those of an irregular, nomadic class were attracted to farm work.²⁵

The Japanese contract labor system which prevailed in California, furthermore, helped to create conditions favorable for the transition of the Japanese from wage-earners to tenants or farm owners. In many instances California farmers resorted to leasing their holdings to the Japanese as a means of securing the nucleus of a labor supply and of transferring to the tenants the task of obtaining the other laborers needed. The Japanese, moreover, venturesome and ambitious to become independent producers, were sought as tenants by landowners because of their willingness to pay higher share or cash rents, to make

improvements upon lands and to tolerate conditions not acceptable to white tenants in matters of housing.²⁶ Furthermore, their operations brought high yields and proportionately high profits to the landowners who rented on a share basis. Again the fact that the Japanese required little or no capital to begin with encouraged them to undertake independent farming. Competing packers and commission merchants financed the Japanese growers after taking liens upon the crops while storekeepers and landlords themselves made generous cash advances. Lastly, their willingness to form partnerships and pool their money in leasing land was of considerable advantage to the *Issei*, a form of cooperation which the other races seldom undertook to better their economic position in agriculture.²⁷

Thus by shrewd bargaining, industry, and the ability to tap credit sources the Japanese were able to climb the agricultural ladder from farm laborer to share tenantry, to cash

²¹ *Ibid.* In one community where the Chinese were paid five dollars per week, the Japanese first worked for thirty-five cents per day in the early nineties. In another district the wages of the Japanese varied from sixty to ninety cents as against one dollar per day, including board, for white laborers. U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 63.

Although they at first worked for lower rates than either Chinese or whites, the Japanese received a progressively increasing amount of wages. By 1910 both Chinese and Japanese rates were approximately equal to those of the whites. Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 19834.

²² The progressively decreasing number of Chinese farm laborers and the outflow of many white workers who, with the return of prosperity in the non-agricultural industries after 1900, created by 1902 a farm labor vacuum into which the Japanese stepped.

Fuller argues that the Japanese, coming at a crucial period in California's labor history, enabled the perpetuation of the State's farm organizational pattern established during the period of Chinese labor dominance. Hence had the Japanese not come when they did the California farmers might have had to change their employment policy, i.e., giving laborers drawn from other ethnic groups better housing, etc. Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 19830.

²³ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, p. 15.

²⁴ Labor gangs were not peculiar to the Japanese. The Chinese were earlier organized in the same manner.

For a discussion of the various tactics employed by Japanese labor contractors in obtaining work and bargaining for wages for their men, see Lloyd Fisher, *The Harvest Labor Market in California* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 24-31.

²⁵ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, pp. 16-17.

²⁶ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, pp. 81-82.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-84; U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, pp. 635-639.

tenantry, and finally for some to farm owner. While in 1900 there were only thirty-nine Japanese farmers in the United States (thirty-seven of whom were operating in California) with an aggregate holding of 4,698 acres, by 1910 there were 1,816 *Issei* farm operators in California alone.²⁸ In 1904 the Japanese in the State owned 2,442 acres, leased 35,258 acres for cash and 19,572 acres for a share of the crops. By 1909 the corresponding figures had risen to 16,449, 80,232 and 59,001 acres.²⁹ By 1920 the Japanese had been written off as an appreciable source of farm labor.

To gain their position in agriculture the Japanese immigrant farmers were compelled to undergo tremendous hardships in a struggle against the elements. Lives and money were lost in the delta region of the lower San Joaquin River, in the Imperial Valley, and in Fresno County. The famous potato king, George Shima, lost money through floods and disasters year after year before his enterprise proved successful. At Livingston the Japanese colony almost starved for five years while it attempted to cope with wind, grasshoppers, and financial chaos.³⁰ Understandably an unusually large number of Japanese failed in farming while a small minority had succeeded in accumulating a great deal of wealth within a few years prior to 1910.³¹

For the Japanese farmers the struggle was not only against the elements but also against discrimination. Having inherited the prejudices which the Chinese had earlier aroused, the *Issei* were made the focus of attack from various political and economic groups. Systematic opposition began with the formation in May, 1905, of the Asiatic Exclusion League which had the avowed purpose of halting Japanese immigration and preventing by legislation the sale of land to Japanese aliens.³² In 1909 no fewer than seventeen different bills relative to the Japanese were introduced in the California legislature including an alien land bill and a school segregation measure, neither of which passed.³³ In the campaign of 1910 in California, the platforms of the Republican, Democratic, and Socialist parties contained exclusion planks.³⁴ In 1913 an anti-alien land bill finally became law. It provided in essence that the Japanese might lease agricultural lands for a maximum of three years,

that lands already owned or acquired in the future in satisfaction of existing liens, might be retained but could not be bequeathed to heirs under a citizenship disability though proceeds from the sale of the land would be turned over to such heirs.³⁵ This was a severe blow, but the Japanese circumvented the ownership provisions of the law by purchasing agricultural land in the names of their minor children born in the United States or by paying American citizens to buy land and hold it for them or their children.³⁶

During World War I, economic antagonism against the Japanese ceased as industrial expansion stepped up labor demand. With farm laborers and operators alike leaving the rural areas for factory employment, the Japanese were eagerly sought as tenants. Hence well over 70,000 Japanese aliens entered the country between 1913 and 1920, among whom the farmers and farm laborers formed the largest group. This influx was a reflection of the relaxation in the enforcement of the Gentle-

²⁸ United States Census Office, *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900. Agriculture*, Vol. V (Washington: United States Census Office, 1902), p. xciv; United States Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910. Agriculture*, Vol. V (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 176; U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 79.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 81.

³¹ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, p. 89.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 169. Among organizations which supported the exclusion movement in California were the American Federation of Labor, American Legion, National Grange, and the Native Sons of the Golden West. For views expressed by representatives of the Asiatic Exclusion League on behalf of Japanese exclusion, see United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Immigration, *Japanese Immigration Legislation*, Hearings before the Committee on Immigration, 68th Congress, 1st Session, on S. 2576, March 11, 12, 13, and 15, 1924 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924), pp. 3, 21-38, 38-51, 103-143, 146 ff.

Fuller maintains that "general anti-Japanese feeling in the rural districts dates from the years subsequent to 1910 and not before as some writers have supposed." Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 19837.

³³ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, pp. 171-172.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

³⁵ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, pp. 77-78. For the full text of the land law of 1913, see Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Resident Orientals on the American Pacific Coast* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), pp. 473-475.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 253; U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 78.

men’s Agreement.³⁷ From 1916 through 1918 nearly 10,000 immigrants of these two categories were admitted.³⁸

The Japanese made the most notable advances in agriculture in the second decade of the present century. Independent Japanese farmers, realizing high wartime profits, expanded their operations, and the degree of their progress is manifested in the following figures. In California in 1910 they owned 17,035 acres, leased by cash 89,466, by share 50,400, and by contract 37,898. By 1920 the corresponding figures were 74,769, 192,150, 121,000, and 70,137.³⁹

The *Issei* farms, totaling 458,056 acres, were located principally in five farming districts of California, on lands which the California State Board of Control considered to be the “best in the State.” These farmers were in the rice district of Glenn, Colusa, and Butte counties; the asparagus, berry, vegetable, fruit and vineyard sections of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Solano, Yolo, Sutter, and Placer counties; the vineyard and fruit districts of Fresno, Kings, and Tulare counties; the vegetable and fruit districts of Los Angeles and Orange counties; and the cantaloupe and vegetable districts of Imperial County.⁴⁰

Comparative acreage figures according to the type of farming undertaken by Japanese farmers in California for 1910 and March, 1921, are shown in Table I.⁴¹

After the first World War, agitation against the Japanese farmers was revived. Agitators found no difficulty in winning adherents for the anti-alien movement among the stream of returning doughboys and workers released from war industries, many of whom now felt their own economic insecurity in contrast to the established position of the Japanese. The movement was abetted by Japan’s aggressions in Siberia, Manchuria, and Korea, and by the awarding of Shantung to Japan in 1919. American nativists made the best of the situation in California at the expense of the Japanese farmers.

The proponents of Japanese exclusion used a plethora of arguments after 1919, among which the economic was not the least of those stressed. The white farmers were told, for example, that the ever-increasing number of

TABLE I

Type of Farming	Acreage	
	1910	1921
Asparagus	10,129	10,300
Beans	14,440	40,000
Potatoes	22,630	18,500
Celery	3,978	3,000
Tomatoes	3,171	7,500
Onions	4,058	9,500
Sugar Beets	31,932	51,300
Melons	-----	12,000
Green Vegetables	14,483	44,500
Berries	4,530	6,100
Grapes	26,587	56,000
Oranges	122	-----
All Other Fruits	26,728	47,500
Hops	3,335	1,260
Corn	-----	8,000
Rice	-----	37,830
Hay and Grains	17,225	35,000
Cotton	630	13,000
Seeds	2,447	15,200
Nursery	821	-----
Husbandry	3,835	-----
Poultry	364	-----
Miscellaneous	1,710	-----
Vacant Lots	1,309	-----
	194,799	416,490

Japanese family farms where the father, mother, and children worked in the field would present unfair competition. V. S. McClatchy, a virulent representative of the Japanese Exclusion League of California, filed a skeleton brief with the Secretary of State of the United States in which he said:⁴²

The Japanese possess superior advantages in economic competition, partly because of racial

³⁷ Specifically the provisions of the governmental agreement stated that Japan of her own accord would refrain from issuing passports to Japanese laborers desiring to enter territories contiguous to continental United States and would recognize the right of the United States to refuse the admission to continental United States of Japanese of the laboring class whose passports did not include continental United States. Albert H. Elliot and Guy C. Calden, *The Law Affecting Japanese Residing in the State of California* (San Francisco, 1929), p. 68.

³⁸ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, pp. 78–79.

³⁹ Mears, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

⁴⁰ For relief maps of the five districts, see California State Board of Control, *California and the Oriental* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1920), p. 53 ff.

⁴¹ Mears, *op. cit.*, p. 242. See also U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 81.

⁴² V. S. McClatchy, *Japanese Immigration and Colonization*, Skeleton brief with the Secretary of State, 67th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Document No. 55 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), p. 14.

characteristics, thrift, industry, low standards of living, willingness to work long hours without expensive pleasures, the women working as men, etc. Combine with these characteristics extraordinary cooperation and solidarity, and the assistance of the Japanese Government, through associations acting for it or in its behalf, and the Japanese, concentrating in communities or industries, are easily able to supplant the whites.

The Japanese were also accused of having "secured the control of one-eighth of all the irrigated lands of California, which are the State's richest," and that they were organizing a market trust.⁴³

The champions of the Japanese argued that the Japanese had taken up much of the worst lands in California and made them fertile, thus helping to reduce the cost of food for the city consumers.⁴⁴ Evidence indicates that the Japanese did indeed develop undesirable lands. The refactory hog wallow lands in western San Joaquin Valley were actually shunned by the white man, but the Japanese succeeded in conquering them. Subsequently, vineyards and orchards were to cover such lands from Seville to Lemon Cove. It was the Japanese who pioneered the rice industry and produced the first commercial crop of rice on hard pan and goose lands "that were not worth paying taxes on."⁴⁵ These are not isolated examples; they were the general condition throughout the State in areas where the Japanese farmed. Through intensive cultivation and the application of scientific techniques, the Japanese had succeeded by 1920 in producing on improved lands crops valued at \$67,000,000.⁴⁶

Despite the presentation of evidence favoring the presence of Japanese farmers in California agriculture, the opposition forces persuaded the State legislature in 1920 to pass an amendment to the land law of 1913. The amended law deprived the Japanese of the right to lease agricultural land and to act as guardian for a native-born minor if his estate consisted of property which the Japanese could not hold under law.⁴⁷

Whether as a result of the land law⁴⁸ or not, Japanese agricultural development in California was checked during the third decade of the twentieth century. In 1921, for example, the Japanese produced 12.3 per

cent of the total farm products raised in the State, whereas in 1925 the percentage had dropped to 9.3.⁴⁹ A corresponding decrease is to be noted in the census figures enumerating the number of Japanese farms and acreage under cultivation for the years, 1920 and 1930:⁵⁰

	1920	1930
Number of Japanese farms	5,152	3,956
Acreage	361,276	191,427

The decline in the number of Japanese engaging in agriculture in the 1920's is said to have been reinforced by the disinclination of the *Nisei* to remain on the farms,⁵¹ but this was an insignificant factor. After all, the great majority of the *Nisei* during this decade were not even in their teens and hence would have had little bearing on the decline of Japanese agriculture.⁵² The agricultural depression of that decade may have been a weighty factor in forcing some of the *Issei* to leave farming, but the legal barriers, the land law and the Oriental exclusion act of 1924,⁵³ did much to discourage the Japa-

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15. Besides the economic arguments, the exclusionists charged that the Japanese were unassimilable, that they owed primary allegiance to the Japanese emperor, and that the birth rate of the Japanese residents would enable them in time to outnumber the whites.

⁴⁴ The American Committee of Justice, *Arguments Against the California Alien Land Law* (Oakland, 1920), p. 11. See also U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 84.

⁴⁵ J. P. Irish, "Orientals in California," *Overland*, Vol. 75, April, 1920, p. 333.

⁴⁶ The American Committee of Justice, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁴⁷ For a synopsis of the alien land law of 1920 as amended in 1923 and 1927, see Elliot and Calden, *op. cit.*, p. 25 ff.

⁴⁸ The effectiveness of the alien land laws has been questioned. One source even goes so far as to say that they actually increased Japanese ownership because landowners who might otherwise have rented to Japanese tenants, after 1920 sold outright to their American-born minor children. U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 86.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁵⁰ United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Agriculture*, Vol. 1. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 684.

⁵¹ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 87.

⁵² For a table showing the age by sex of the Japanese population in California, see United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 Population*, Characteristics of the Nonwhite Population by Race (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 98.

⁵³ For an explanation of the Immigration Law of 1924, see Elliott and Calden, *op. cit.*, p. 13 ff.

nese from entering farming or expanding their operations.

By the eve of the Second World War, however, the number of Japanese farmers in California nearly equaled that of the 1920 figure although the acreage farmed was much lower. Hence in 1940 there were 5,135 farms operated by this race with a total acreage of 220,094.⁵⁴ During the previous decade the maturing *Nisei* had become a factor in agriculture, and their participation in this occupation undoubtedly accounted for the small increase in the number of farmers classified in census figures as "Japanese"; yet, even at this late date the management and operation of Japanese farms were still in the hands of the *Issei* male.⁵⁵

With respect to land tenure among the Japanese immigrant farmers only a small percentage of them actually owned their farms. In California only twenty-five per cent were owners or part owners, less than five per cent managers, while the majority of them, seventy per cent, rented their farms. In Los Angeles County, where almost thirty per cent of all Japanese farms were located, approximately ninety per cent of the operators were tenants. In contrast, in the counties of Fresno, Merced, Placer, and Sacramento only fifty per cent of the Japanese growers were in this category.⁵⁶ Apparently there were more tenant farmers in truck and field-crop-producing areas of the State than in those regions where considerable fruit and other perennial crops were cultivated.

Various theses have been presented to account for the low rate of decline of tenancy among the Japanese farm operators. In 1910, eighty-five per cent of them were classified as tenants and thirty years later, in 1940, seventy per cent of them were still in the same category. True the laborious method by which they worked up the agricultural ladder had not enabled many of them to accumulate the money necessary to purchase and equip a farm. But the reasons are more fundamental. Students of the problem have stated that although doubt was expressed as to the effectiveness of the alien land laws, the forces which effected these measures deterred many eligible Japanese from acquiring tenure

status, particularly farm ownership, in regions where local sentiment was not favorable to the Oriental. Because of this uneasiness, say the experts, many may have preferred tenure of land which would enable them to move on short notice, and a type of farming, *i.e.*, truck farming, which required a minimum of capital investment for permanent structures and perennial crops. The restrictive measures, to the extent that they discouraged farm ownership, probably contributed to establishing an unstable tenure pattern among the *Issei* agriculturalists with associated undesirable features inherent in short-term leasing, insecurity of land occupancy, and high tenant mobility.⁵⁷

The Japanese, whether farm owner or tenant, usually farmed on a small scale. In 1940 their farms averaged a little over forty acres⁵⁸ as compared with the national average of two hundred acres.⁵⁹ The *Issei* generally preferred to cultivate small acreages intensively, as did their counterparts in Japan, in order to grow crops with high returns per acre. Consequently only a very insignificant number of the race were engaged in livestock farming which requires extensive acreages of forage crops.⁶⁰

The significance of the Japanese in California agriculture by 1941 is attested to by production figures. In that year they grew forty-two per cent of the State's acreage of commercial truck crops. On 205,989 acres of land they grew produce whose valuation has been estimated at between thirty and thirty-

⁵⁴ United States Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Agriculture*, Vol. III, General Report (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 224.

⁵⁵ Leonard Bloom and Ruth Riemer, *Removal and Return* (University of California Publications in Culture and Society, Vol. IV, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949), p. 76.

⁵⁶ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 117.

⁵⁷ Adon Poli and Warren M. Engstrand, "Japanese Agriculture on the Pacific Coast," *Journal of Land and Public Utilities Economics*, Vol. XXI (November, 1945), pp. 354-355.

⁵⁸ U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, Vol. III, General Report, p. 224.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁶⁰ Kūichi Kanzaki, *California and the Japanese* (San Francisco, 1921), p. 97.

five million dollars, or between thirty and thirty-five per cent by value of all such crops. For example, they raised ninety per cent of the snap beans for marketing, spring and summer celery, peppers, and strawberries; fifty to ninety per cent of such crops as artichokes, cauliflower, cucumbers, spinach, and tomatoes; and twenty-five to fifty per cent of the asparagus, cabbage, cantaloupes, carrots, lettuce, onions, and watermelons.⁶¹ The Japanese, moreover, grew nearly 30,000 acres of grapes, mostly in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys; and about 19,000 acres of deciduous fruits and nuts, including plums, peaches, peas, prunes, apricots, apples, almonds, walnuts, and cherries.⁶²

The immigrant Japanese were also engaged in the raising of poultry and nursery crops. Poultry was often raised on farms which also grew crops, although some strictly poultry farms were operated by the race in Sonoma and Los Angeles counties. They grew close to 3,000 acres of nursery crops,⁶³ a phase of agriculture which the *Issei* began to undertake very early in southern California and Tulare County. By the eve of World War II the Japanese had control of roughly sixty-five per cent of the flower industry with over \$16,000,000 of the annual \$25,000,000 flower market business in Los Angeles being in their hands.⁶⁴

The noteworthy aspect of pre-World War II Japanese farming was the ability of the farmers of this ethnic group, each growing on a small scale, to compete successfully with large vegetable grower-shippers. The Japanese were not out-competed because they possessed aptitude for the type of agriculture in which most of them were engaged. They possessed special skill in soil preparation, crop and seed selection, planting, cultivation, irrigation, and spraying. They were also able managers. "Japanese capacity for labor in the fields, growing, cultivating, and marketing truck crops is secondary to their managing ability," said one observer who was acquainted with their ways.⁶⁵ Another reason for their success in agricultural competition was their willingness to organize cooperative farm organizations.

A cohesive group, the Japanese immigrants very early in their careers as independent farmers cooperated to meet common problems. The early Japanese farm organizations, local in character, aided their members in finding ranches, served to limit the competition for land by fixing a maximum rental that a Japanese should pay, assisted in marketing the crops and obtaining supplies, interested themselves where disputes arose between a landlord and tenant, and disseminated scientific knowledge of agriculture and horticulture through publications of their own. Many of these local associations served as mutual benefit societies as well.⁶⁶

In southern California, Japanese farmers' associations (*nogyo kumiai*) were more extensive in their operations than elsewhere in the State. Such organizations were connected with marketing associations in Los Angeles for channeling crops from farm to market. The two types of associations were also joined in a service federation which for a fee provided its members with daily newspaper and radio broadcasts of produce prices.⁶⁷

There is no evidence to indicate that the Japanese played any significant role in Caucasian-dominated farmers' organizations such as the Farm Bureau Federation and the Grange. These groups traditionally had been anti-Japanese. The Los Angeles County Farm Bureau, for example, in 1920 demanded the retraction of Japanese rights to lease, rent, or own not only agricultural lands but also "any land whatsoever." It also urged that a constitutional amendment be passed which would disqualify the American-born Japanese from citizenship in order to prevent

⁶¹ Poli and Engstrand, *op. cit.*, p. 357. *Vide* Table IV.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, p. 232.

⁶⁴ The *Rafu Shimpō*, *The Year Book*, 1939-1940 (Los Angeles: *The Rafu Shimpō*, 1940), p. 58. See also Ichihashi, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-204.

⁶⁵ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 118.

⁶⁶ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, pp. 85-86; U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, pp. 341-343, 396-397.

⁶⁷ Poli and Engstrand, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

them from acquiring land titles.⁶⁸ A few local growers' associations did have Japanese members as in the case of two cantaloupe growers' organizations in the Imperial Valley. White growers, however, generally disliked shipping with the Japanese.⁶⁹

It is generally conceded that the Japanese played a distinctive part in developing the marketing system for fruits and vegetables, particularly in Los Angeles County. In Los Angeles as early as 1901, at least one Japanese produce wholesaler was operating at the City Plaza where there was a farmers' market. When the Los Angeles City Market was established in 1909 by a private corporation capitalized at \$200,000, ninety-four Japanese held eighteen per cent of the stock. Of 180 growers selling produce from stalls in the market yard, 120 were Japanese. They were less dominant at the Wholesale Terminal Market, established some years later by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, and least so in the Central Wholesale Market.⁷⁰ By 1941 of the 167 commission merchants in the three Los Angeles wholesale markets, twenty-nine were Japanese-owned while of 232 stall operators selling in the yards, 134 were Japanese. During this one year the Japanese did approximately \$26,000,000 worth of business in distributing thirty-seven per cent of the produce handled on a car lot basis by the Los Angeles City Market and the Wholesale Terminal Market. Of the green vegetables about seventy-five per cent passed through Japanese distributors.⁷¹

As in the wholesale distribution of produce, the Japanese dominated the retail distribution of fruits and vegetables prior to 1941. By that year there were in the neighborhood of one thousand retail produce outlets managed in the main by *Issei*. These "fruit stands" employed about five thousand persons and did \$25,000,000 worth of business. The Oakland area had sixty-five such stores and San Francisco eighteen.⁷²

In the course of their rise to a distinctive position in California agriculture, the Japa-

Since World War II the Japanese farmers have not organized into farm associations limited to their own ethnic group. More and more of them, especially in Los Angeles County, are being accepted by and are joining Caucasian organizations, particularly the Farm Bureau Federation. The Japanese farmers have discovered that nominal annual dues paid to the local County Farm Bureau bring them greater benefits than could membership in organizations limited to their own ethnic group. This fact was impressed upon many Japanese growers in and around Torrance in 1951. When a water supplier in the Dominguez Hill district petitioned the California Public Utilities Commission for an increase in water rates, the farmers of the area protested through the Los Angeles County Farm Bureau. The Commission's subsequent ruling in favor of the farmers served to win over many hitherto skeptical Japanese to the cause of the Farm Bureau. Interview with Ototaro Yamamoto, 21237 Water Street, Torrance, California.

In connection with Japanese participation in Caucasian farm organizations, it is interesting to note that of two Japanese who in 1956 were serving as Directors-at-Large of the Los Angeles County Farm Bureau, one of them was an immigrant Japanese farmer, Ototaro Yamamoto.

⁶⁸ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, p. 236.

⁶⁹ Bloom and Riemer, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.

⁷⁰ U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 120.

⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 121; Bloom and Riemer, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

⁷² U. S. Congress, *National Defense Migration*, p. 121.

After the evacuation of the Japanese from the West Coast, the agricultural situation underwent a drastic change in California, and naturally the produce distribution system was to reflect the new condition. There are no longer in California the large numbers of Japanese-operated fruit and vegetable departments in the various food markets as were so common prior to 1941. Today the large chain food stores which have supplanted the independents have integrated all of their departments under one management, a process which began in the early 1930's. The plethora of Japanese "fruit stands" prior to the Second World War can be accounted for by the fact that a person with little capital could go into business. The grocer-owner of the numerous independent food stores usually managed only the grocery department and leased out the meat and the fruit and vegetable departments, with the lessor furnishing all of the equipment. To begin business the Japanese operator had only to bring in the produce which the Japanese wholesalers who dominated the wholesale markets were willing to supply him on credit. These conditions no longer exist.

The wholesale distribution system was considerably altered as a result of the Japanese evacuation from the Pacific Coast states soon after Pearl Harbor. The ethnic system of fruit and vegetable distribution was destroyed. Since 1946, however, the Japanese have begun to regain their former standing in the wholesale markets. As of 1956 there were fourteen Japanese commission houses and twenty-nine individual stall operators located in yards, according to officials of the Wholesale Terminal Market and the Los Angeles City Market. The Japanese wholesalers (obviously now chiefly *Nisei*) again control the distribution of bunch goods, such as local carrots, beets, and celery, as well as berries. The wholesalers no longer cater in the main to individual retailers as in the past but now sell to buyers representing the large super markets. Interviews on February 23, 1956, with Homer A. Harris, Association of Produce Dealers and Brokers, Wholesale Terminal Market; Lynn Phelps, Chief Clerk, Wholesale Terminal Market; and Walter P. Fleming, Los Angeles City Market.

⁶⁸ Jacobus tenBroek, Edward N. Barnhart, Floyd W. Matson, *Prejudice, War and the Constitution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954), p. 52.

nese immigrant farmers were condemned by their critics for various uncommendable practices. In their desire to become independent farmers, it was asserted, the *Issei* paid comparatively high rent for land which led to an increase in the rental value of land and to a certain extent caused the displacement of farmers of other ethnic groups.⁷⁴ Another charge made against the Japanese was that the value of land diminished in areas where they settled which forced the white population to move away. This was undoubtedly true, especially with respect to residential property, but evidence to the contrary is also available. Hence in a certain section of Fresno County a Japanese was the first to settle and begin farming. Within four years two of his countrymen and four white families moved into the area. While the first settler paid thirty-five dollars an acre for the hay land, the later purchasers were compelled to pay sixty dollars for the same type of land.⁷⁵

Early in their careers the Japanese were also criticized for over-specialization and over-production of crops such as berries and asparagus, a consequence of their eagerness to acquire quick profits. The practice is said to have resulted in the lowering of market prices of such crops which forced non-Japanese farmers to withdraw from producing them. But actually the white farmers did not generally grow the type of crops in which the Japanese specialized, and therefore the effect upon the farmer was minimal. Instances, moreover, in which prices were adversely affected because of Japanese competition were comparatively few.⁷⁶

A further practice attributed to the *Issei* growers was "mining" the soil. The allegation was not entirely without foundation because, as already indicated, the Japanese were predominantly tenants, not owners, a situation which inevitably affected their attitude regarding land improvement. But at the same time it is important to note that a soil scientist of the United States Department of Agriculture minimized the seriousness of the charge by stating: "I am inclined to believe the thorough and excellent cultivation given land under Japanese farming, which favors aeration and biologic processes pro-

moting soil fertility, may in a large measure offset deterioration through removal of plant-food materials."⁷⁷

Finally, during the early years as farmers the Japanese were taken to task for failing to honor contract agreements.⁷⁸ No adequate explanation has been given for this, but the fact that East and West differ in the stress each places upon the inviolability of contract may be a partial reason. No sweeping generalization should be made about the Oriental, however, because the Chinese farmers were not generally accused of breaches of contract.

Various other pertinent data are available which help to form a clearer picture of the Japanese immigrant farmers in California. The standard of living of the average *Issei* farmers prior to 1941 was definitely below that of other ethnic groups engaged in the same occupation.⁷⁹ They did not, generally speaking, improve property or build a better class of homes. Most of them were merely rough, unplastered frame structures of three or four rooms.⁸⁰ An acute observer has described Japanese farm life in the following words:⁸¹

In California I met for the first time large groups of Japanese, industrious farmers, fruit growers, and poultry raisers, in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, from El Centro to Colusa, in and around Los Angeles and Fresno and Sacramento. It was comparatively easy to distinguish between the Japanese ranches and the white man's farm . . . Either because of the insecurity with which the Japanese has regarded his holdings in this country, the farm home of a Japanese, even of a wealthy farmer, is far below that of a home of a white man owning a similar

⁷⁴ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, p. 309.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 643.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 307-308.

⁷⁷ Mears, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.

⁷⁸ U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIII, pp. 87-88.

⁷⁹ A comparison of the data for the Japanese and Italian truck gardeners around Sacramento prior to 1910 reveals that the Japanese farm homes were generally rated from bad to fair in repair while those of the Italians were rated fair to good. In Los Angeles County the Japanese homes were in fairly good repair. The Scandinavian farmers in Santa Clara County and the Germans in Anaheim had homes kept in good condition. Cf. Tables 209, 255, 289, and 119 in U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, pp. 838-840, 864-865, 884-889.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

⁸¹ Konrad Bereovici, "The Japanese in the United States," *The Century*, CX (September, 1925), p. 608.

piece of ground or of similar wealth.⁸³ The neatness of the field . . . is in direct contrast with the flimsy, improvised condition of the living quarters of the Japanese.

This is a faithful picture of Japanese farm houses in the 1920's and, in general, it had not changed considerably by 1941. The shifting and unsettled nature of the Japanese farmers induced by the land law and the inability of the *Issei* to become naturalized citizens prevented many from establishing themselves permanently in any community. Under such conditions there was little incentive to build permanent homes. In the settled districts, however, chiefly around Fresno, where there were large Japanese landholdings, the standard of living was surprisingly high.⁸³

Because of their frugality the Japanese immigrant farmers, like many of their counterparts from Europe, sent money abroad to their families and relatives. In 1910, for example, the Japanese in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River district remitted an average of \$120.96 to Japan while the Italian and Portuguese farmers sent an average of \$34.52 and \$7.50 respectively.⁸⁴ It is obvious that remittances to Japan declined as the Japanese farmers were compelled to divert their earnings to the raising of their growing families in America.

Although the Japanese were more recent immigrants and their language differed fundamentally from English, a larger number of them in 1910 spoke English than did any other immigrant group except the Scandinavians and Germans. The reason for this is that many of the *Issei* came by way of Canada and Hawaii where they were in contact with English-speaking people; a few of them had studied English in Japanese high schools; and of more importance, nearly all of the adult males had worked on farms operated by English-speaking persons.⁸⁵

The fact that the Japanese farmers were able to speak the English language did not, however, imply that they were able to read English with facility. Hence statistics reveal that they showed very little interest in subscribing to English language newspapers. But because of the high literacy rate among the Japanese immigrants, they invariably

subscribed to Japanese language newspapers.⁸⁶

The *Issei* farmers in California took an interest in the education of their children who were encouraged to acquire the maximum amount of schooling. The Census Bureau reports that in 1940 the median school years completed by all native-born Japanese in California was 12.2, for the native-born female 12.1. As for the rural farm male and female the median was 11.4 and 10.4, respectively, which was still higher than the national median.⁸⁷ The Japanese immigrant parents also founded Japanese language schools in the various farm communities throughout California by means of which they hoped to establish adequate parent-child communication. Like the Scan-

⁸³ In the 1930's the writer had occasion to visit the home of a Japanese operator of one of the largest growing and shipping concerns in California. The owner of a large packing shed and a grower of crops on thousands of acres of well-tilled land, this operator lived in a humble unpainted frame home surrounded by huge sheds housing hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of trucks, tractors, and other farm equipment. The picture, in view of his wealth, was incongruous to say the least.

⁸⁴ E. Manchester Boddy, *Japanese in America* (Los Angeles, 1921), p. 107.

⁸⁵ See Table 101 in U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, p. 776.

Comparative figures for money sent abroad in 1910 by farmers of various ethnic groups in the Western States are as follow:

Race	No. Reporting	No. Sending	Money Sent Abroad	
			Total Amount	Average Amount
Armenian	19	10	541.00	54.10
German-Russian	34	7	1,195.00	170.71
Italian	144	71	2,879.00	40.55
Japanese	760	245	38,090.00	155.47
Portuguese	57	14	290.00	20.71
Scandinavian and German	60	8	145.00	18.13

U. S. Immigration Commission, *Reports*, XXIV, p. 740.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁸⁷ See Table 69 in *ibid.*, 741. Japanese language newspapers were published in several cities in California and mailed to the rural subscribers. As early as 1906 the San Francisco Japanese colony had two dailies, each with a circulation of 10,000. Several daily newspapers were printed in Los Angeles while a Japanese monthly was published in Oakland and in Sacramento. Kanzaki, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

For the past several decades most Japanese language newspapers have devoted at least one page to news in English for the benefit of their *Nisei* readers.

⁸⁷ See U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population, Characteristics of the Nonwhite Population by Race*, p. 104.

dinavian, Greek, Jewish, and Chinese immigrant groups, each of whom had similar language institutions in America, the Japanese also wished through their language schools to transmit their cultural heritage to their offsprings.

By 1941 the Japanese immigrants in agriculture, the majority of whom had come to America as "birds of passage," intending to make enough money and then to return to Japan, had settled down in various farm communities. They were rearing their native-born children in the American tradition. For most of the *Issei* there was now no longer any strong desire to leave the country in which they had resided the greater part of their lives.

Today, in their seventies and eighties, the remaining *Issei* can only reminisce of their own life of struggle to gain a position, usually humble, in agriculture. Very few, however, even among the Japanese themselves, realize the important role the Japanese immigrants collectively played in California agricultural history. Coming in large numbers after the

turn of the twentieth century, they filled the farm labor vacuum and thus prevented a ruinous slump in those lines of agriculture for which California is noted, namely, in the growing and harvesting of intensive crops. As independent farm operators, the Japanese with their skill and energy helped to reclaim and improve thousands of acres of worthless lands throughout the State, lands which the white man abhorred, and made them fertile and immensely productive. They pioneered the rice industry and planted the first citrus orchards in the hog wallow lands in the San Joaquin Valley. They played a vital part in establishing the present system of marketing fruits and vegetables, especially in Los Angeles County, and dominated in the field of commercial truck crops. From the perspective of history, it is evident that the contributions of the *Issei* to California's economy far outweigh the evils that have been attributed to their agricultural activities. They were undeniably a significant factor in making California one of the greatest farming states in the Union.

FIFTY-FOUR EXPERIMENT STATIONS

There are now fifty-four agricultural experiment stations in the United States exclusive of those now being established in our insular possessions. Connected with these are about seven hundred skilled employees.

(*Farm and Fireside*, 1902)

THE GRANGE A SOLID FOUNDATION

The Grange, now stronger than ever before, is a solid foundation upon which could be built a larger organization of wonderful power for the betterment of affairs of both home and state.

(*Farm and Fireside*, 1902)

ICE CREAM CANDY

Three cupfuls of granulated sugar, one-quarter of a cup of water, butter twice the size of a hickory nut; just before it is "done" add a tablespoonful of vinegar. A cupful of cream may be added instead of the water if convenient. Boil until it will harden in water. Pour on buttered plates and let it stand until it is cool enough to pull.

(*American Farm News*, 1891)

PROLIFIC TURKEY

A hen turkey in Morris county, Penn., has produced an egg a day for 115 days consecutively.

(*American Farm News*, 1891)

SEEING IS BELIEVING

S. M. Tuttle of Ashland, Mo., exhibited a peach that measured eleven and one-half inches one way and ten and one-half the other, and weighted three-quarters of a pound.

(*American Farm News*, 1891)